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**AN EVALUATION OF A TRANSORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
PROCESS PROMOTING POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE**

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**A Research Project  
Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graziadio Business School  
Pepperdine University**

---

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science  
In  
Organization Development**

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**by  
Erin Hall  
July 2020**

This research project, completed by

ERIN HALL

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the faculty of The Graziadio Business School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE  
IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date: July 2020

Faculty Committee

Committee Chair, Christopher G. Worley, Ph.D.

Committee Member, Ann E. Feyerherm, Ph.D.

Deryck J. van Rensburg, D.B.A., Dean  
The Graziadio Business School

## **Abstract**

Humanity's largest and most complex social problems are not going to be adequately addressed by one organization working alone. This study addressed two research questions: (1) what ingredients enable successful transorganization collaboration seeking positive social change? and (2) what role does trust play? Using a case study methodology, participants and observers were interviewed. The data was analyzed using Ainsworth and Feyerherm's diagnostic model of transorganizational systems and Vangen and Huxham's trust-building and trust-sustaining theory. The findings emphasize the interdependence of transorganizational system (TS) design components and, in particular, of trust with each of the components.

*Keywords:* transorganizational systems, transorganizational development, trust

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

In describing the origins of modern philanthropy in the late 19th and early 20th century, Zunz (2012) writes:

Charity had been for the needy; philanthropy was to be for mankind. Philanthropists, however, could not have done this by themselves. The much-heralded shift from charity to philanthropy could not have happened without a partnership between the rich, who had made their careers as organizational wizards, and the various progressive elites of the academic world, local governments, the judiciary, and emerging professional associations. Together these interests figured out how to put the new money to work for science, education, and public health (pp. 10-11).

For more than a century, American philanthropists have been partnering with nonprofit, for-profit, academic, and governmental organizations to seek solutions to complex and large societal problems. The nature of work in the social change space centering around nonprofit organizations requires collaboration between funders and these organizations. The most complex and largest problems facing humanity are not going to be solved by a single organization working alone but rather by collaborative, multi-stakeholder, and multi-organization teams.

Trist (1983) described complex problems, also called wicked problems, messes, or meta-problems (Churchman, 1967), that are too comprehensive for just one organization and can only be addressed by multiple organizations with inter-organizational capabilities. In organization development, when organizations partner to solve a problem or take advantage of an opportunity, the relationship is referred to as a

transorganizational system. Cummings (1984) defined transorganizational systems (TS) as “groups of organizations that have joined together for a common purpose” (p. 369). Organizations in a TS work together towards a common goal by pooling resources and can perform jointly but maintain their autonomy as separate organizations (Cummings & Worley, 2014). TSs can take many shapes with a wide range of purposes; they may have few or many partners and can span private and public sectors.

This research focuses on a collaboration involving multiple organizations seeking to address a societal problem through innovation. This sort of collaboration is tenuous and inherently complex. TSs tend to be underorganized with relationships between members loosely organized. Often, leadership and authority in a TS are decentralized with each member organization having a certain amount of autonomy which requires navigating laterally. TSs are also vulnerable to change and members may have trouble managing varying levels of commitment and motivation (Cummings & Worley, 2014).

As noted above, transorganizational collaborations give rise to a number of concerns and yet multi-organization collaborations have the unique potential to address complex challenges. Given the range of issues that can face a TS, there are a variety of factors integral to their success (Ainsworth & Feyerherm, 2016; Huxham & Vangen, 1996). The issue of trust has been reported to be significant in the collaborative process (Das & Teng, 2001; Vangen & Huxham, 2003).

### **Purpose and Significance of this Study**

The purpose of this research is to understand the factors that lead to a successful transorganizational collaboration focused on solving a complex societal problem. In particular, the research seeks to understand the role that trust plays. It examines the

Compassionate Schools Project (the Project or CSP), a collaboration between a research university, a large public school district, and the office of a civic leader-philanthropist using a case study methodology. Through interviews, the research attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the ingredients of successful transorganizational collaboration?
2. What role does trust play in the success of a transorganizational collaboration?

In light of the demonstrated importance of transorganizational collaboration to address the most complex and large problems facing humanity, this research explored the aspects that are important to a specific, successful collaboration and compared those findings to existing literature and a diagnostic model. The study aimed to add to the conversation by confirming (or not) existing understandings about the factors that enable successful collaboration. This study focused on the work that happened within and between organizations, and yet recognized that trust is an important interpersonal issue in addition to being an interorganizational issue.

### **Research Setting**

The Project seeks to have a major impact on children's education nationwide in terms of academic performance, physical education, character development, and child health policies. It involved the creation and implementation, as part of a large research study, of a new health and wellness curriculum for elementary school students. The curriculum integrates mindfulness for stress management and self-control; contemplative movements, postures, and breathing for physical awareness and agility; nutritional knowledge for healthy eating; and social and emotional skills for effective interpersonal relationships. CSP's research design is a large-scale, randomized control, trial study

involving 45 schools over seven years of planning, implementation, data collection, and analysis.

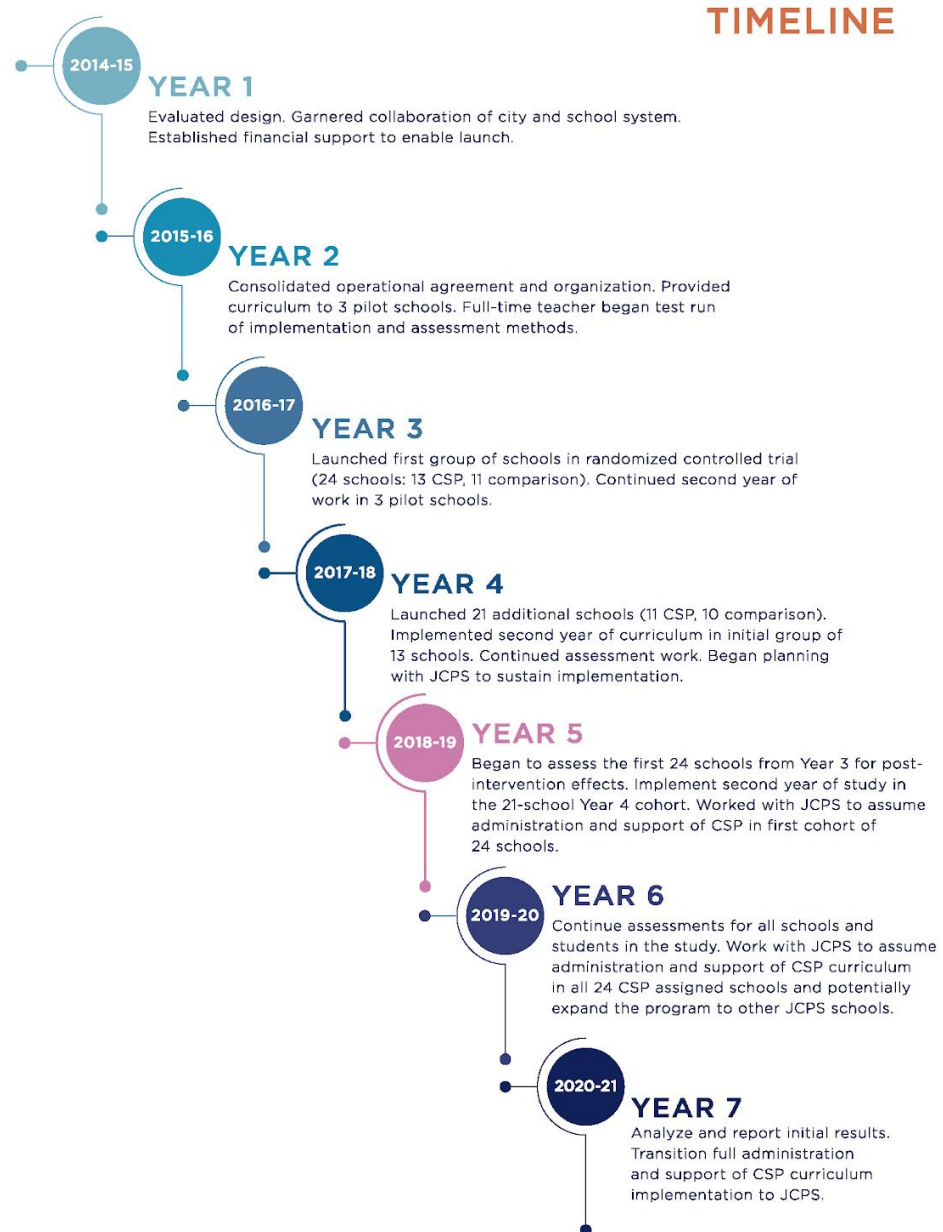
The Project is a collaboration between a major research university, the University of Virginia (UVA); a large public school district, Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) in Louisville, Kentucky; and a civic leader-philanthropist, who was eventually known as the Project Chair. Even within the University of Virginia, the Project represents a cross-unit collaboration between the school of education and two centers, Youth-Nex and the Contemplative Sciences Center, each providing unique capabilities and expertise. UVA scholars created the curriculum and designed the research study. In partnership with JCPS, these scholars implemented the curriculum and conducted a randomized-control trial in a portion of the county's elementary schools. In addition, planning for the Project was supported by the mayor of Louisville and Metro City Government.

A large coalition of stakeholders, including funders, civic leaders, scholars, and community members, was built to enable the Project. The budget for the seven-year project was \$11.75 million and the Project was additionally supported by staff and resources from UVA and JCPS. This money needed was secured collaboratively by UVA and the Office of the Project Chair (Chair's Office) from a network of private individual philanthropists, foundations, and corporations. As the Director of Advancement for the Contemplative Sciences Center at UVA, I served as the lead professional fundraiser for the Project. To advise Project leaders, two advisory groups were formed: (1) a Scientific Advisory Board, made up of prominent scientists and practitioners and (2) a Local Community Advisory Team (LCAT), made up of Louisville-based community leaders.

The Project's formal planning, implementation, and research was designed to span seven academic years, as illustrated in Figure 1. Though the Project would not even be imagined for many more years, its origins can be traced back to events as early as 2010. In that year and in a previous role as a development officer for UVA, I first met the Project Chair, an alumnus of UVA. That meeting began a process of the Project Chair re-engaging with the University of Virginia. In that same year, the mayor of Louisville was first elected, having run for election with a compassion platform. In 2012, the mayor of Louisville recruited the Project Chair, a native of Louisville, KY with deep connections to the city, despite living elsewhere, to help realize the mayor's vision around compassion. Their goal was to do so in practical ways including possibly in an education setting. In the same year, the Contemplative Sciences Center was founded at UVA. In conjunction with the creation of this new center, UVA scholars began exploring the possibility of a significant study around a yoga and mindfulness curriculum in schools. After learning about UVA's interest in such a study in 2013, the Project Chair went on to connect the UVA researchers to Louisville and JCPS.

**Figure 1**

***Compassionate Schools Project Timeline***



Note. Reprinted from Compassionate Schools Project 2018-19 Annual Report. University of Virginia (2019). Reprinted with permission.

The Project was officially launched with a planning year in 2014-15. A pilot of the curriculum in 2015-16 followed with full implementation beginning in 2016-17. At the end of the 2017-18 year, trial schools began to cycle off of Project funding for implementation of the curriculum. At that juncture, JCPS made a commitment to continue funding the delivery of the curriculum at schools that wanted to continue with the program and this has continued to date. In the spring of 2020, data collection was disrupted due to the global coronavirus pandemic; plans are under development to complete data collection when possible. At the time of the publication of this thesis, the Project is entering the seventh and final year of its initial design. It is within this context that the present study sought to understand the factors contributing to the success of the Project and the role of trust.

### **Organization of this Research Report**

Chapter 1 introduced the concept of transorganizational systems and the role trust plays in their success, explored the purpose of this study and its implications, and provided an overview of the CSP. Chapter 2 discusses existing literature and theories surrounding transorganizational collaboration. Specifically, it explores relevant literature focused on trust in transorganizational collaborations and the role of such collaborations in addressing complex societal challenges. Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methodology, particularly narrowing in on the audience, research setting, data collection, and analysis. Chapter 4 examines the results of the research and data analysis. Chapter 5 provides a summary of findings and draws conclusions. Recommendations are made for future transorganizational collaborations. Limitations are cited and suggestions for further research are presented.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The purpose of this research was to understand the factors that lead to a successful transorganizational collaboration and to understand the role that trust plays in such collaborations. The CSP was used as a case study to explore these issues. This literature review focuses on collaboration and collaborations involving multiple organizations, known as transorganizational systems (TS). Literature related to trust in transorganizational collaborations is reviewed. The chapter concludes with a review of literature, specifically with collaborations involving nonprofits focused on social innovations.

### **Collaboration and Transorganizational Systems**

Gray (1985) defined collaboration as having three requirements: (1) a pooling of appreciations and/or tangible resources, (2) by two or more stakeholders, to (3) solve a problem or problems which none of the parties can solve individually. Huxham and Vangen (2005) detail the following reasons that a collaboration might be advantageous:

- Access to Resources
- Shared Risk
- Efficiency
- Coordination and Seamlessness
- Learning
- The Moral Imperative

Huxham and Vangen (2005) argued that the final reason on their list, the moral imperative, may be the most important one. “The really important issues facing society ... cannot be tackled by any organization acting alone. These issues have ramifications



for so many aspects of society they are inherently multi-organizational” (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 7). Similarly, Trist (1983) explained that complex problems, also called wicked problems, messes, or meta-problems (Churchman, 1967), are so extensive and multi-faceted that no organization, no matter how large, can cope with them alone. Inter- and multi-organizational capacity is needed to address the wicked problem.

Collaboration can be understood relative to other change strategies, including networking, coordination, and cooperation. Himmelman (1996) defines these four strategies on a “continuum of complexity and commitment” (pp. 26-27). The four strategies are:

Networking is defined as exchanging information for mutual benefit.

Coordination is defined as exchanging information and altering activities for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose.

Co-operation is defined as exchanging information, altering activities, and sharing resources for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose.

Collaboration is defined as exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources, and enhancing capacity of another for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose (Himmelman, 1996, pp. 27-28).

To enhance the capacity of another organization as described in Himmelman’s (1996) definition of collaboration, the organizations must share risks, responsibilities, resources, and rewards. Himmelman (1996) explained that each of these strategies can be appropriate depending on the degree to which issues of ‘time, trust and turf’ can be overcome. Himmelman (1996) also argued for the importance of a shared vision and commitment to share power and responsibility.

A collaboration involving multiple organizations as stakeholders is commonly called a transorganizational system (TS). Cummings (1984) defined TSs as “federative or coalitional structures whose member organizations maintain their separate identities and disparate goals, yet, employ either some formal organization or informal collaboration for joint decision making” (p. 368). The members of these multi-organizational systems join together for a period of time to seek an advantage, solve a problem, or pursue a project that cannot be achieved by an individual member organization acting alone. Cummings (1984) goes on to define transorganizational development (TD) as the scientific and practical practice of seeking to improve the effectiveness of a TS. Cummings (1984) argued that this practice is distinct from those otherwise occurring in organization development focused on the single organization or group due to the systems involving multiple organizations. These systems tend to be underorganized with more informal relationships and a leadership and power structure that is dispersed (Cummings & Worley, 2014).

Theorists have offered multiple models for the stages of collaboration. Similarities exist in these various models with a general progression from identifying the opportunity or problem and partners to convening partners to organizing and implementing the collaborative work and ultimately evaluating the collaboration. For example, Cummings (1984) proposes four stages, including identification, convention, organization, and evaluation. Differences emerge in the names of the stages and definitions of each (Cummings, 1984; Cummings & Worley, 2014; Gray, 1985).

## **Diagnosing TSs**

Ainsworth and Feyerherm (2016) developed an open systems diagnostic model of TS, based on Cummings and Worley's (2014) models for diagnosing organizational systems at the individual, group, and organizational level. These models are organized into Inputs, Design Components, and Outputs. The Design Components are the social and technological components that allow the Inputs to be converted to Outputs and roughly correspond with Cummings' (1984) organization phase. In Ainsworth and Feyerherm's (2016) model for TS, the Inputs are a 'wicked mess' or problem of scope, complexity, or scale too significant for one organization to solve alone and/or an opportunity. These inputs are congruent with Gray's (1985) definition of collaboration and the reasons to collaborate proposed by Trist (1983) and Huxham and Vangen (2005). Furthermore, the Outputs in their model include individual organizational effectiveness, transorganization system effectiveness, and solutions, either full or partial, to the 'wicked problem.'

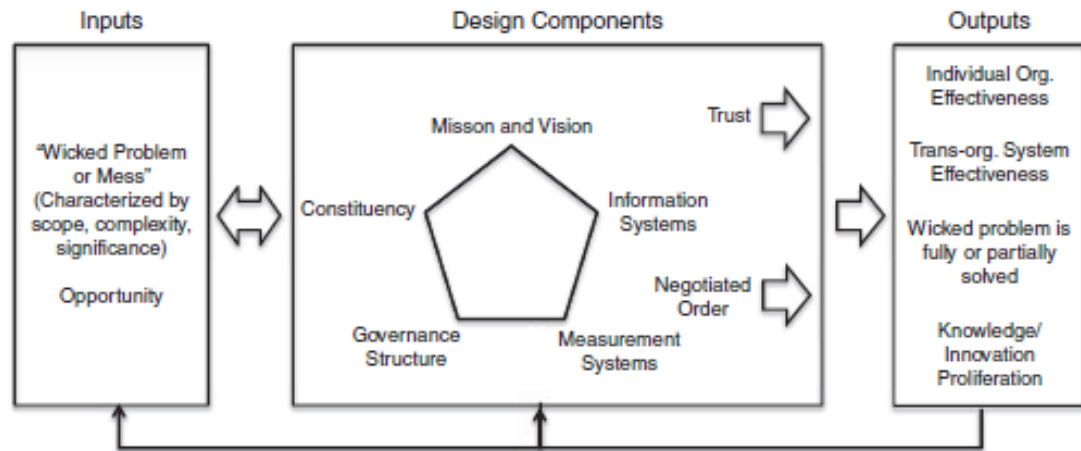
The Design Components, the 'ingredients for success,' allow for coordinated action among TS members to turn the Inputs into Outputs. The Design Components are Mission, Vision, and Goals; Constituency; Governance Structure; Measurement Systems; and Information Systems. Mission, Vision, and Goals are critical to the functioning of the TS as they provide clear purpose and goals that are shared or, at least, compatible. Constituency involves the identification, recruitment, and engagement of the right stakeholders as members of the TS. These stakeholders include both the organizations and the individuals that make up the organizations. Governance Structure refers to mechanisms for organizing and managing the actions of the TS, such as decision-making processes, role assignment, and basic resources needed to keep the TS

functioning. Measurement Systems are the functions the TS uses to monitor the processes and impact of the TS. Distinct from Measurement Systems, Information Systems include the ways information is collected, organized, and distributed throughout the TS.

In the Ainsworth and Feyerherm (2016) model, trust and a ‘negotiated order’ (Nathan & Mitroff, 1991) are considered Design Components as well as Intermediate Outputs. Trust is defined as the ability to anticipate another’s behavior with reliability and consistency along with the belief that a TS member will not act opportunistically and has competence (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Negotiated order is effectively the agreed-upon norms and understandings that the member organizations use when they interact with one another (Nathan & Mitroff, 1991). These norms can emerge organically or be determined intentionally. Negotiated order also includes the shared views and perspectives about the issue that the TS is organized to address. This research uses the Inputs and Design Components of this model to examine the ‘ingredients’ that enabled the success of the CSP (Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

***Comprehensive Model for Diagnosing Transorganizational Systems***



Note. Reprinted from “Higher order change: a transorganizational system diagnostic model,” by D. Ainsworth and A. Feyerherm, 2016, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 29(5). Copyright Emerald Group Publishing Limited. Reprinted with permission.

**Trust in Transorganizational Collaborations**

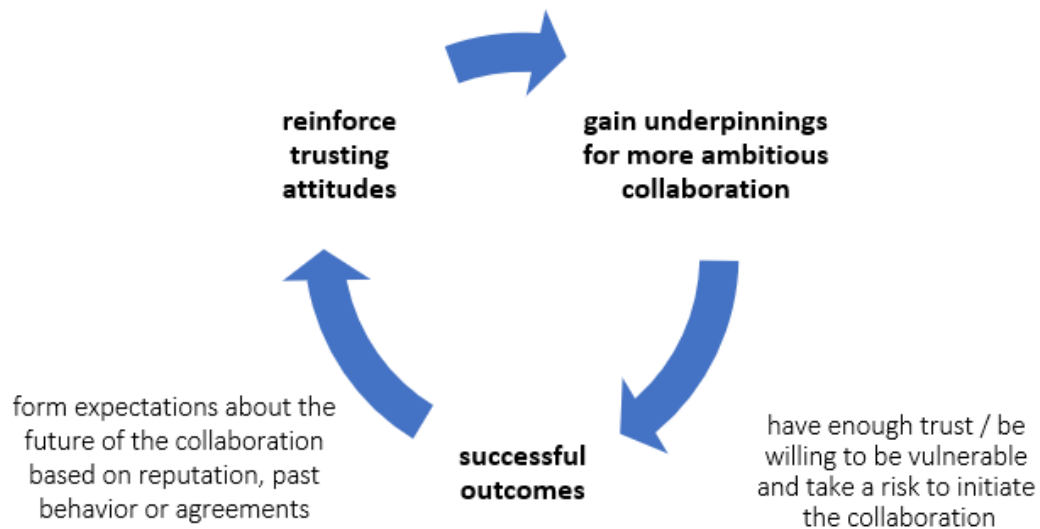
Trust is viewed as both a design component and an intermediate output in Ainsworth and Feyerherm’s (2016) model. Not surprisingly, numerous scholars agree that trust is a key determinant of the success of a collaboration or TS (e.g., Ainsworth & Feyerherm, 2016; Das & Teng, 2001; Himmelman, 1996; Lawson, 2004; Vangen & Huxham 2003).

Vangen and Huxham (2003) explain that “trust cannot be built in isolation of any other key variable and that trust building requires investment of time and careful consideration of other key issues including management of purpose, power imbalances, credit sharing, the need for leadership without allowing anyone to ‘take over,’ and so on” (p. 8). Based on a thorough literature review, Vangen and Huxham (2003) identified five key themes - expectation forming, risk, trust, cyclical development, and trust

building. They argued that those key concepts can be shaped into a cyclical process of trust building (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

***Cyclical Trust-Building Loop***



Note. Adapted from *Nurturing Collaborative Relations: Building Trust in Interorganizational Collaboration*, by S. Vangen and C. Huxham, 2003. Copyright by Sage Publications. Adapted with permission.

In this model, trust builds with each positive outcome in a collaboration. Trust can be future-oriented, rooted in either anticipation of something forthcoming, or historical, based on past experience. Ultimately, creating trust requires taking risk and each time outcomes meet expectations, trusting attitudes are reinforced. Das and Teng (2001) make a similar argument that trust, control, and risk are inextricably interlinked in multi-organization collaborations.

Das and Teng (2001) argued that trust decreases concerns about opportunistic behavior, allows partners to better integrate and reduces the need for formal contracting. They explained trust in two dimensions: goodwill trust and competence

trust. Goodwill trust is concerned with good intentions and integrity. Goodwill trust reduces the perceived threat that a collaborator will act opportunistically at the detriment of another. Competence trust is based on the resources and capabilities of the collaborators. These can include capital and human resources, both manpower and expertise.

Vangen and Huxham (2003) distinguished between ‘comprehensive’ trust management and ‘small wins’ trust management. The former is required for ambitious collaborations where significant risk is required to achieve the collaborative example whereas the latter is based on taking small risks to achieve small wins. The CSP studied here is legitimately considered ‘ambitious’ and therefore this study focuses on ‘comprehensive’ trust management as defined by Vangen and Huxham (2003). They further distinguished between practices that initiate the trust building loop, where trust is weak or does not exist, and the practices that sustain the cycle, where trust is present. Examples of these practices are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1**

***Comprehensive Trust Management Practices for Ambitious Collaboration***

<b>Initiating the trust building loop</b> (weak trust)	<b>Sustaining the trust building loop</b> (where trust is present)
<p><b>Manage risk as an integral part of trust building</b></p> <p>Explore complexity of structure and aims by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying with whom to network and build trust</li> <li>• Assessing sources of power and influence</li> <li>• Exploring who can act</li> <li>• Exploring differences in organizational purposes</li> <li>• Negotiating agreement on aims</li> <li>• Exploring willingness and ability to enact agenda</li> </ul> <p><b>Assess potential for achieving collaborative advantage and if associated risk can be managed and is worth taking</b></p>	<p><b>Nurture, nurture, nurture!</b></p> <p>Facilitate trust building cycle through nurturing relationships by carefully managing aspects of the collaborative process including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Power imbalances</li> <li>• Credit recognition</li> <li>• Joint ownership</li> <li>• Varying levels of commitment</li> <li>• Conflicting views on aims and agendas</li> </ul> <p><b>Maintain a high level of trust to create the basis for collaborative advantage</b></p>

Note. Adapted from *Nurturing Collaborative Relations: Building Trust in Interorganizational Collaboration*, by S. Vangen and C. Huxham, 2003. Copyright by Sage Publications. Adapted with permission.

**Transorganizational Development for Social Innovation**

Numerous authors make the case for the importance of collaboration and TSs to innovate and implement solutions that promote positive social change (e.g., Cummings & Worley, 2014; Huxham & Vangen, 1996; Shier & Handy, 2015; Trist, 1983). A variety of societal problems and opportunities require engaging stakeholders from multiple sectors and organizations. Huxham and Vangen (1996) outlined the following five key themes in the management of relationships between nonprofit and other organizations:

- Compromise



- Communication
- Democracy and Equality
- Power and Trust
- Determination, Commitment, and Stamina

Shier and Handy (2015) used a social innovation framework to study ways in which nonprofits and their partners create positive social change. They found that collaborations are particularly useful in doing so because they create capacity, align goals around a particular issue, and focus efforts. They also identified the ways in which funding and funders can affect the focus of change efforts. Himmelman (1996) argued for the importance of collaboration in producing improved public and social service outcomes and the importance of those collaborations challenging existing structures of power and control that contribute to class, race, and gender inequities that exist in those societies.

The existing literature includes a number of case studies. For example, Mangioficio (2013) examined an early childhood learning network using complexity theory as a framework that enabled key observations and conclusions. That study found the importance of meaning-making dialogue and the impact of power as an attractor pattern. Worley and Parker (2011) used Cummings' (1984) model of TD as a tool to intervene in a multi-stakeholder collaboration and found that a shared, multilevel view of the domain issue was necessary for the productive development of the TD. In addition, they found a strong link between negotiated order (Nathan & Mitroff, 1991) and the creation of a referent organization (Trist, 1983). Tsasis (2009) studied a set of nonprofit AIDS organizations and found that a balance of dependence and autonomy is needed to

initiative interorganizational relationships. Furthermore, Tsasis (2009) found that interorganizational relationships were stabilized at the interpersonal level; social interactions of individuals can lead to successful collaboration between organizations.

### **Summary**

This chapter reviewed extant theory on collaboration and in particular collaborations involving multiple organizations, known as transorganizational systems (TS). The chapter concluded with a review of literature related to trust in transorganizational collaborations and reviewed literature dealing specifically with collaborations focused on social innovations. This research seeks to add to the conversation by taking the CSP as a case study and testing the Ainsworth and Feyerherm's (2016) diagnostic model for TS and Vangen and Huxham's (2003) theory of comprehensive trust management.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Procedures**

This chapter described the research design based on the two research questions:

1. What are the ingredients of successful transorganizational collaboration?
2. What role does trust play in the success of a transorganizational collaboration?

This chapter also reviews the sampling process, efforts to protect human subjects, and the measurement process. The chapter closes with a discussion of the data analysis methods.

#### **Research Design**

This study used a qualitative case research methodology (Creswell, 2003) to examine the factors that enabled and sustained the collaboration responsible for the CSP. This project was chosen because it is a TS system, I had access, and, using Ainsworth & Feyerherm's (2016) diagnostic model, I was able to make some assumptions about the inputs and the success of the TS based on the initial goal of executing the project.

A case study approach is a method of inquiry in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a single situation, bounded by time and activity (Creswell, 2014). The advantages of this approach include collecting multiple perspectives on the same set of circumstances and events. Case studies can help generate new ideas and are an important way of illustrating theories (McLeod, 2019). A disadvantage of a case study is that it can be a very inefficient process as there is a great deal of data to collect and analyze. In addition, a case study requires the participation of a very specific set of people who may or may not be available to participate. Even then, the individuals may not be very talkative and not answer the questions asked or be overly talkative and tend to explore tangents (Braille, 2018).

Data for the case study was collected through semi-structured individual interviews that were conducted face-to-face as well as using video conferencing. In addition, records that were created as part of the collaboration were collected and reviewed.

### **Research Sample**

In an effort to understand the ingredients of a successful transorganizational collaboration and, in particular, the role that trust plays, I conducted interviews with leaders and key stakeholders of the Project. The interview subjects included two groups, participants and observers. I interviewed nine participants and three observers for this study. Their organizations and roles are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
***Interviewees***

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Participant Role</b>
Office of the Project Chair	Chair
	Project Manager
	P.R. and Strategic Planning Consultant
	Chief Liaison
University of Virginia	Principal Investigator
	Co-Author, CSP Curriculum + Co-P.I., CSP
	Co-Author, CSP Curriculum + Site Director & Co-P.I., CSP
	Executive Director, Contemplative Sciences Center ( <i>facilitated collaboration by introducing and connecting key parties and playing an ongoing coordinating role in fundraising and otherwise</i> )
Jefferson County Public Schools	Current Superintendent
Observers	President & CEO of a Louisville-based foundation and lead CSP funder
	Executive Director of a national foundation that is a lead CSP funder
	Professor and Researcher (serves on CSP's Scientific Advisory Board)

Participants were defined as leaders and key staff members from the three organizations leading the collaboration - the University of Virginia (UVA), Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), and the Office of the Project Chair (Chair's Office). The intent was to have representative samples from each of the three collaborating organizations. The samples for UVA and the Chair's Office each included four

participants. The sample for JCPS only included one participant as additional participants were recruited but were ultimately unresponsive or unavailable.

The observers included stakeholders of the Project, two funders and one member of the Advisory Board. The observers from the funder group were chosen because they represented two of the larger funding organizations, one based in Louisville, KY and one who is a national funder. The intent for the observer group was to include a representative sample of Project funders, Advisory Board members, and representatives of metro government with a key role in the project. Additional Advisory Board members and city government representatives were recruited but were unresponsive or unavailable.

The interviewees were all known to me given my former role as the Director of Advancement for the Contemplative Sciences Center at UVA. In this role, I served as the lead professional fundraiser for the Project working closely with the Project Chair and their office to secure the needed money.

### **Protection of Human Subjects**

The questions asked were part of a normal set of reflective questions one would ask about a project nearing completion. There were minimal psychological or emotional risks in answering these questions. Participation in this study was voluntary and participants could opt out at any time for any reason. Appendix A contains the email template used to request interviews. Participants were asked to review an Informed Consent Waiver (included as Appendix B) and all verbally acknowledged they had done so and agreed to participate before interviews began. Data generated from participants was kept confidential and maintained in a secure fashion. For convenience and to

protect interviewee identities, all interviewees will be referred with plural pronouns (i.e. they and them). Quotations included from identifiable interviewees were verified with each of them individually before being included.

## **Measurement**

The primary data collection instrument was a semi-structured interview protocol. All interviews took place individually and lasted 30 minutes to two hours with most lasting about one hour. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed using the web application otter.ai. I collected data from the participants on their connection to the Project, with whom they interacted the most, resources needed, how the collaboration functioned, challenges, and trust. The questions were designed to encourage participants to share their own stories about the Project, including their perceptions of what enabled it. The order of questions allowed anecdotes and observations about trust to emerge before trust was introduced directly. Observers were asked a more limited set of questions about their connection to the Project and perceptions about what enabled the collaboration and how trust functioned between the three primary partner organizations. This set of questions was designed to focus the stakeholders' comments on their perceptions of interactions between the three primary organizations. Appendix C contains the interview protocol for participants and Appendix D contains the interview protocol for observers.

## **Data Analysis**

The analysis focused on the Project as a case study and looked to address the two research questions. The data were analyzed looking for answers to the enablers of

success of the Project as well as understanding the role that trust played both within and between organizations.

The interview data were analyzed using a grounded theory process (Creswell, 2014; Taylor-Powell & Renner, 2003) following these phases:

1. Organizing and getting familiar with the data
2. Focusing the analysis
3. Categorizing information
4. Identifying patterns and connections within and between categories
5. Interpreting the information

Using the otter.ai program to transcribe the interviews, I compared sample transcriptions to the audio content to verify accuracy. While it was not always perfect, the transcriptions very nearly captured what was said.

Organizing and becoming familiar with the data required reviewing the interview transcriptions and notes repeatedly. Initially, I read through each interview transcript produced by otter.ai. On this initial review, I listened to sections of the recordings to verify and, as needed, corrected the transcriptions. This process was especially necessary to correct proper names. I reviewed the notes I took during and immediately following the interviews about key themes of the conversations and what struck me.

Information was categorized in a number of ways. Initially, I mapped the answers to the interview question “What 3-5 people do (did) you interact with the most?” to create a visual of whom the participant interviewees interacted with most. I also noted all events that participants or observers mentioned in the interviews and used that



information along with archival data and my own recollections as a participant in the Project to build a timeline of major events and critical moments.

Participants were asked “What resources were needed to make the project possible?” and “What were the most significant challenges?” Direct answers to these two questions were combined to identify the most important enablers and constraints.

A random set of five participant interviews representative of the three collaborating organizations was selected for initial analysis. These five included two interviewees each from UVA and the Chair’s Office and one interviewee from Jefferson County Public Schools. I reviewed the interview transcripts and interview notes for these five participants to identify the primary topics and themes raised during the interviews.

Following this initial review, I established four categories of codes: 1) Design Components of TSs, 2) Trust Initiating Behaviors, 3) Trust Nurturing Behaviors, and 4) Emergent codes. The first three categories are grouped as *a priori* codes and summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3**  
***A priori* Codes**

Category	Code
TS Design Component	Mission and Vision Information Systems Measurement Systems Governance Structure Constituency Trust Negotiated Order
Trust Initiating Behaviors	Identify Partners Assess Power and Influence Explore who can Act Explore Differences in Organizational Purposes Negotiate Agreement on Aims Willingness & Ability to Enact the Agenda
Trust Nurturing Behaviors by Managing	Communication Power Imbalances Credit Recognition Joint Ownership Varying Levels of Commitment Conflicting Views on Aims & Agendas

**Design components of TSs.** For the first research question, the *a priori* codes were based on Ainsworth and Feyerherm's (2016) diagnostic model of transorganizational systems. I looked for positive/supportive and negative/critical comments and observations related to inputs and design components, such as mission and vision, constituency, information systems, and trust.

**Trust initiating behaviors and trust nurturing behaviors.** For the second research question, the *a priori* codes were based on Vangen and Huxham's (2003) cyclical trust-building loop model and their descriptions of activities that initiated the trust-building loop or sustained the trust-building loop.

**Emergent codes.** In addition, 18 emergent codes not included in the categories above were identified when reviewing the interview data. The next step involved reviewing all of the interview transcripts and tagging sub-sections of each interview with the identified codes. Quotes from the interviews and/or synopsis of certain sections were loaded into a spreadsheet and marked with applicable codes. The process resulted in 253 lines of data. Each line of data (an excerpt or synopsis of a section of an interview) was marked with the applicable codes, which ranged from one to five codes per line. After this process was completed, I summed the mentions per code as well as how many of the interviewees made a comment relating to each code. The codes were summed by all interviewees and also by participants only. Any code with one-third of interviewees or one-third of participants identified was considered a code of significance.

I then employed a process of visualizing the data using flipcharts, post-it notes, and outlining to organize and reorganize both the answers to the direct questions (resources and challenges) and the codes of significance to draw relationships between the various answers and codes. This process resulted in the identification of Trust as an overarching theme and then the following five themes, each of which was connected to Trust-initiating and/or Trust-sustaining behaviors identified as *a priori* codes: 1) Opportunity; 2) Mission, Vision, and Goals; 3) Constituency; 4) Information Systems; and 5) Negotiated Order.

## **Summary**

The intent of this study was to understand the key ingredients in a transorganizational collaboration seeking to promote positive change for society. Specifically, the research sought to answer research questions related to the ingredients of a successful transorganizational collaboration and the role trust plays in that success. Using semi-structured individual interviews, 12 participants and observers of the CSP were interviewed. Questions were related to the general background of the collaboration, how the collaboration was enabled, resources, challenges, and trust. Using an analysis of answers to direct questions and a coding system, this research categorized the themes heard. Based on these themes, the results in the next chapter emerged.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

The purpose of this research was to understand the factors that led to a successful transorganizational collaboration and in particular to understand the role that trust played in such collaborations using the CSP as a case study. Interviews attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the ingredients of successful transorganizational collaboration?
2. What role does trust play in the success of a transorganizational collaboration?

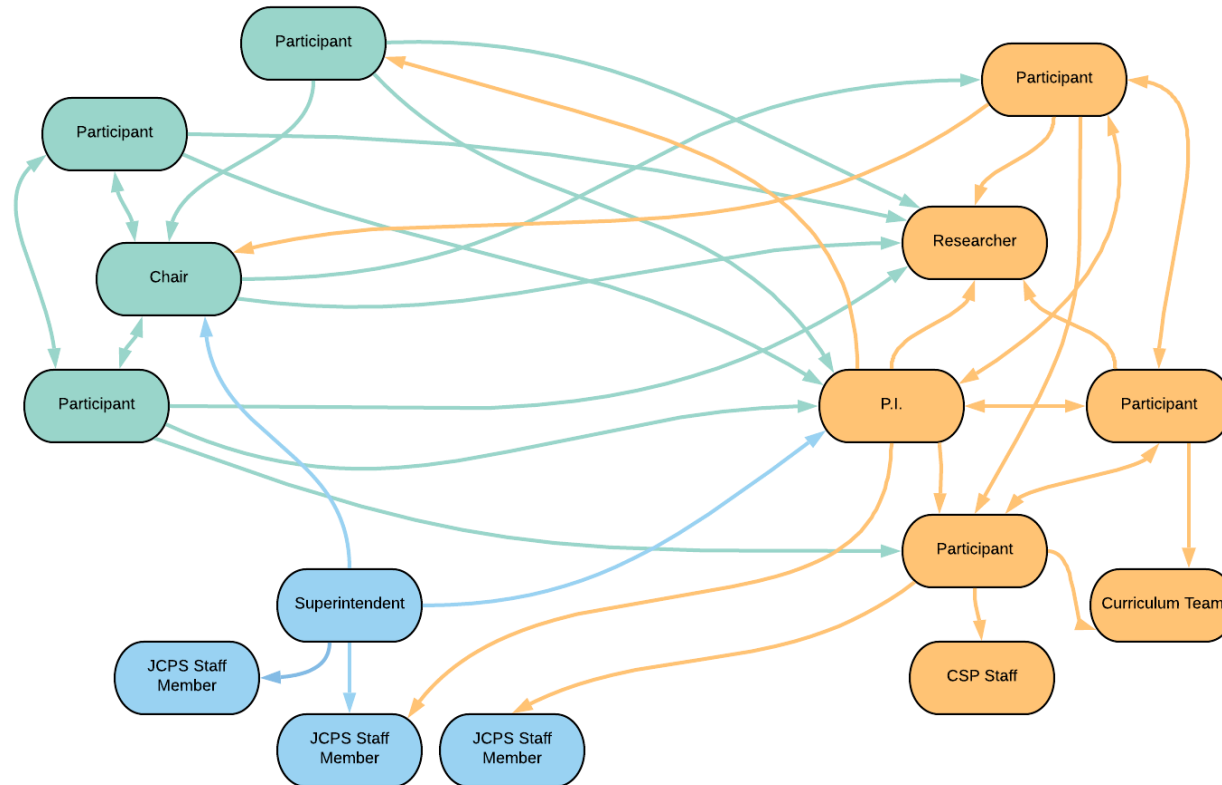
This chapter presents the results of 12 interviews with nine core contributors and three observers of the Project. First, it presents a network map created based on participant responses. Second, it outlines key themes that emerged from the interviews.

### **Network Map**

Participants were asked to name the three to five people with whom they interacted the most on the project. This question helped me understand the relationships within the network and where trust-building and sustaining behaviors might occur. Figure 4 illustrates the participants' answers to that question. Three people were mentioned most often, me (7 times and identified as the Researcher), Principal Investigator (5 times), and the Project Chair (5 times). Of all of the people identified, only the Principal Investigator and Project Chair were connected to individuals in all three organizations. The degree of interactions indicated between the University of Virginia (UVA) and the Office of the Project Chair (Chair's Office) are significantly greater than between either of those organizations and Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS).

**Figure 4**

*Compassionate Schools Project Network Map*



Note.: Green = Chair's Office // Orange = UVA //Blue = JCPS

An arrow moving away from a name means the person named the person where the arrow lands. I.e., Six people pointed to me/"Researcher" because they identified me as a person they interacted with the most. However, I was not an interviewee so I do not have any arrows coming from me.

## **Key Themes**

The interview transcripts were analyzed against three categories describing 19 total *a priori* codes as detailed in Chapter 3. In addition, the analysis discovered an additional set of emergent codes. Participants were asked “What resources were needed to make the project possible?” and “What were the most significant challenges?” Direct answers to these two questions were analyzed alongside the significant codes (mentioned by one-third or more of interviewees). The information was organized and grouped according to the components in Ainsworth and Feyerherm’s (2016) model.

The analysis found that Trust was a key issue across all aspects of the collaboration. In addition, the analysis identified the following five key ingredients for the collaboration: 1) Opportunity, 2) Mission, Vision, and Goals, 3) Constituency, 4) Information Systems, and 5) Negotiated Order. This presentation is organized into six sections. First, it presents findings about Trust and then about each of the five key ingredients. The analysis connected trust initiating and trust maintaining behaviors (as described in Chapter 2) to each of the five key ingredients and those are discussed along with each of the five key ingredients. Throughout, this section discusses relevant similarities and differences between responses and provides direct quotes from interviewees as appropriate for context.

## **Trust**

Trust emerged as a key theme throughout the interviews and is explored here in four ways.

**Level of trust.** When asked to characterize the level of trust between the collaborating organizations, six of 12 interviewees described it as “high” or

“exceptional.” They explained that trust must both be established and then maintained; they emphasized the importance of trust to the Project. One participant said, “It took time to build. I think there was a high level of trust. And I think that's what got us through the challenges.”

**Goodwill and competence trust.** Both participants and observers emphasized the importance of goodwill trust (that collaborators have integrity and will do what they say) and competence trust (that collaborators have the capacity and expertise to accomplish their part of the project). One participant noted, “She did not do what she said she would do, so that betrayed a bit of trust there.” Another participant explained their thoughts about trust, “The best way to build trust is you say what you mean and you do what you say. And you are good at what you do and you work hard at it. That's really simple. That's what I look for. And that's what I try to convey to other people through my actions.” Another remarked that they believed that “intention is really coming from the right place.” When asked to explain the success of the ‘somewhat unexpected collaboration’ that enabled the Project, one observer said:

I think it was about trust. I think that we all trusted each other. I trusted that the mayor believed in this and thought this was crucially and critically important. I came to believe that [the current superintendent] thought this was a great thing. [The previous superintendent] said she did. ... There became a real trust in the leadership at [UVA]. We didn't know them before but we got to know them and we trusted that what they said is what they meant. I think when you have trust, that is very much a part of a collaborative group of people, things can get done. That's a lot of money that got raised ...which means [funders had] to trust what people were saying, that they had credibility. It felt like everybody remained true to the mission, true to the vision. There was a shared understanding of where we're trying to go. I never saw anybody waver from that. And I see things fall apart a lot because people sort of lose interest or they lose the vision or the ultimate goal isn't held up as the North Star.



**Building and maintaining trust.** Interviewees described both how trust was established and how it was maintained. As one participant said:

We think about earning trust, and then we act as if... it's done, right. But it's an ongoing thing. It's like maintaining trust. So I think it's important to call out...trust maintenance. I've never actually heard that phrase. It means you continue...to re-earn trust. And that's exciting because that's a way where people can ... really engage with people in a very different way. And then in so doing, you create all kinds of new possibilities.

**Trust through others.** Five of 12 interviewees made comments about how trust was created or built through the trust of other people. For example, one participant (A) explained that they trusted me (B), who they (A) understood trusted another participant (C). In other words, because of my trust in Participant C, Participant A believed Participant C to be competent and have integrity.

### **Opportunity**

In Ainsworth and Feyerherm's (2016) diagnostic model, the inputs to a transorganization system (TS) are a 'wicked mess' or opportunity. In the case of the CSP, the 'wicked messes' being addressed included child health and wellness education in a large, public school district. The 'opportunity' around this project took multiple forms.

**Personal and organizational motivation.** Nine of 12 interviewees made positive comments about the project creating an opportunity for an individual or organization to do something new. A participant explained that this project "didn't have the same kind of structure that I was used to and so it was, it's still, intriguing to me." Another talked about the importance to the Project of doing things in new ways and 'boundary spanning' for both organizations and individuals:

We had something very unusual occurring which was first of all this [atypical] group of people working together intensely on something that was boundaries spanning and boundaries shifting in ways that nobody probably could have anticipated. ... what if we weren't so bounded, what if we let development and grants work together, why don't we use connections that other people have as well as the University ... I think that's one of the stories here is a gradual boundary spanning. ... learning and trying to be open, I have to think differently about this kind of work than I had my prior ones, but also at the same time not do that too much because it had to occur a certain way.

Eight of 12 interviewees commented about participating in the project serving an individual's personal and/or professional ambitions. The Project Chair explained, "I felt a responsibility to relate to Louisville even though I don't live there....to try to channel what I had seen my parents do which was to care about Louisville." Another shared that their professional ambitions and timeline were very specific:

I came at this at a time when the length of my career was understandable ... and I knew these projects take a long time. ... I was not interested in taking on something that wouldn't allow me to do the kind of work I wanted to do. ... there were questions I had that I was excited about and ... I could be a bit of a stickler about that. ... If you guys won't play the way I want to play, I don't want to play.

Interviewees explained that they understood high engagement with the project related to how participation in the project aligned with personal ambition. Interviewees cited both positive and negative examples of their personal ambitions or interests being correlated with level of engagement and observed this correlation in others.

**Money.** In the early stages of the collaboration, it emerged that there was a likelihood or possibility of securing the needed funding for the Project given the combination of partners and thus the opportunity to generate sufficient funding for the Project was a key driver. Specifically, the Project Chair, who initially connected UVA and JCPS, was able to secure the initial funding, made a personal gift, and was instrumental in the fundraising. Eight of nine participants identified money or funding as

a most important resource and/or fundraising as one of the biggest challenges of the project. A participant talked about the trust between the implementation team and the fundraising team:

[With] funding, there was a huge amount of trust. There were times when we were in situations where if we don't get more money really soon we're about to have to pull the plug on this whole thing. But, nobody was despairing. Everybody was like, "it's going to happen." On the flip side, there's been a huge amount of trust from those doing the fundraising or representing the project publicly to know that the work that we're doing is good enough for you sticking your neck out there and saying what you're saying.

### **Mission, Vision, and Goals**

All interviewees made comments about the importance of the mission, vision, and goals of the project to its success and/or their participation. Nine of 12 highlighted the significance of the project. A participant explained they agreed to accept a key role on the team after hearing about the "vision for the project. I was totally captivated." A participant shared, "We're working for something bigger than ourselves, we're working for something maybe beyond what we even realize we're working on. And, you know, in that sense, we have to trust that we have the capacity to open ourselves up to something more than maybe what we can even name but we can feel." Another explained, "I saw stuff that I thought was important to be in classrooms and I saw a way to bring innovation into schools that people had talked about wanting to do but we had not been able to do all that. It really made me feel like I wanted to dedicate the rest of my career to that."

As part of more global comments about the importance of the vision of the Project, three interviewees specifically made a comment about doing this "for the kids." For example, one said, "A shared mission is real and touches your heart as well as

your head. That's really important. I think everybody felt like we're really doing something for kids. How can you be against that and not be excited about that?"

Trust, both trust initiating and trust nurturing, were an important part of the reason mission, vision, and goals contributed to CSP's success. For example, developing a shared understanding and agreement of the vision and mission of the project was critical to building trust among the collaborators or what Vangen and Huxham (2003) describe as 'negotiating agreement on aims.' One participant said, "I don't think anyone believes that there's any type of agenda involved other than doing what's best for children - research and effective research - to ensure that we're doing the right things. I think that trust is there."

Interviewees also cited examples of collaborators needing to negotiate differences in various aspects of the collaboration or what Vangen and Huxham (2003) describe as 'managing conflicting views on aims.' For example, UVA and JCPS had to consistently negotiate and align the needs of the research agenda with the school agenda. The superintendent said,

An issue that we had to work through was assisting the researchers and making sure that they got data. As kids moved on to middle school, for instance, how we could survey [them] in middle schools without disrupting their learning time. In our district, when a kids leaves elementary school, they might go to 10 different middle schools, you know, and how we would do that. But I think we worked through that successfully.

## **Constituency**

Constituency involves the identification, recruitment, and engagement of the right stakeholders as members of the TS (Ainsworth & Feyerherm, 2016). For the purpose of this study, Constituency is understood to mean both the organizations that make up the TS, the individuals within the organizations (who are actually doing the work of the TS),

and the relationships that bind the people and organizations together. All interviewees talked about the importance of relationships to the Project, within the team and with stakeholders, and six of nine participants identified relationships as a most important resource for the project. One participant said, “When we talked about the project, it's all about relationships. And that's why this all worked. We did a lot to cultivate those relationships and the trust in Louisville, with our team, with JCPS, and with our funders.”

**Human resources.** Seven of nine participants identified personnel as a most important resource for the project. Interviewees talked about members of the core leadership team as well as the broader team (i.e., data collectors, coaches, and teachers).

**Stakeholders.** Interviewees described the importance of engaging key individuals (for example, Louisville’s mayor and school district leaders) as well as getting input from a wide variety of community members. When asked about what enabled the collaboration, one interviewee described the importance of “reaching out and building relationships.” A participant said,

Although there was intense collaboration, and an incredible amount of resources, human and financial, spent trying to make sure every voice was heard and every voice was at the table, it's humanly impossible in a community of 782,000 people to have every voice at the table. ... I just wanted [a community member] to be completely heard, and to talk through it with [the Principal Investigator] and to my knowledge, they have talked through that, because that individual shows up every time we come together, and I believe has become a champion for this.

Another participant explained the importance of building relationships with principals as part of the effort to recruit schools to participate in the Project,

If we had known that at the beginning, we would have probably approached it differently. We needed that buy in from the superintendent for sure, but I don't think we should have relied on the superintendent's office to help us recruit as much as we did because some of the schools really didn't like the superintendent's office.

Similarly, the teachers delivering the curriculum were critical to the success of the Project. A participant shared the following about working to motivate a teacher to deliver the curriculum with fidelity,

The only angle we have is let's try to build a relationship with this [teacher] and see if we can make any positive change. So we're trying to be persistent, go out there every week. Our coaches try and find something that they have in common. Try and find the one thing that they're doing well, and just really build on that. For that teacher, maybe the curriculum doesn't matter right now, maybe what matters is that we have to get something positive happening in this classroom.

Interviewees also emphasized the importance of cultivating relationships with funders and potential funders, citing the importance of financial resources as discussed above.

As with the mission, vision, and values theme, both trust-initiating and trust-sustaining behaviors were a significant reason the constituency/relationships category contributed to CSP's success. Ten interviewees (including all three observers) described the importance of 'identifying partners with whom to network and build trust' (Vangen & Huxham, 2003) as critical to the development of CSP. They mentioned identifying organizational partners (or identifying individuals within those organizations) and various stakeholders beyond the core organizations. One observer described the Project Chair as "the glue" explaining,

...glue from the standpoint is that he was in many cases, the voice or the representative that would allow everybody to come to the table and then to activate all those networks towards one goal. I don't think UVA could have done that by themselves. And [JCPS would not have been] able to reach out to UVA by themselves.

A participant said,

We put ourselves out there. So we went and partnered with the YMCA, we partnered with the local museums, we partnered with, the public libraries to build relationships and to help support them in some small, tiny way with their programming. ... Because if [CSP] comes up in conversation, they can say, "oh, I

know what that is and those people aren't so bad.” We were putting names and faces to [CSP.]

‘Exploring who can act’ and ‘Exploring differences in organizational purposes’ (Vangen & Huxham, 2003) were two other key trust-initiating activities related to Constituency.

A participant described the process of shifting from partner identification to enabling the agenda as, “There was a moment when these ingredients existed. But then came this question of how do you take good ingredients and begin to actually make the meal.”

Another said, “... it took a while to ramp up. There was a lot of stress early on around “are we going to get this thing funded?” And, bringing people who were eeking up to the swimming pool together to then all jump in. It took a long time and a lot of work.”

With regard to exploring differences, the researchers and JCPS leaders had to navigate the aims of the research with the needs and requirements of the school system. A participant explained,

That whole first year ... [there was] so much focus on ... relationship building...working with JCPS and building relationships with the people within JCPS. [We were] trying to understand what would work best for them to get this work done logistically but also to best meet their needs at the same time that we're carrying out this project as we had envisioned it.

Another said, “The primary commitment was to get this evaluation project done. I think there are plenty of people inside the project who had a primary commitment that was not about that, but they signed on to that and kept that commitment.”

The analysis suggests a stronger collaborating relationship between UVA and the Chair’s Office than either had with JCPS. An observer said, “It didn't seem to me from the outside that [JCPS] was doing much as a partner except allowing this to happen.” A participant explained that “the [Chair’s Office] and UVA collaborated in a very engaged way and came up with proposals to JCPS. There was nothing that we could force on

them. ... The buck kind of stopped at JCPS, they decided how this would go, but were collaborative and wanted to make it work.”

Participants described the varying levels of commitment to the Project between the partners. A participant described the relationship with JCPS as ‘asymmetrical,’

I think there's a lower level of trust or an asymmetrical kind of trust. [For the implementation,] we were really eager to do whatever [JCPS] asked of us. If they needed us to do a meeting, do a training, we were going to be there, and we're going to do it. There were a lot more questions in the opposite direction. If we needed something from them for the success of the project, we couldn't have as high of a level of trust if they were going to be champions or advocates for the project. Part of that is because they have 1,000 different priorities and we have one.

### **Information Systems**

In the Ainsworth and Feyerherm model (2016), Information Systems include the ways information is collected, organized, and distributed throughout the TS. Three of nine participants cited communication and messaging as a most important resource for the Project. They mentioned the importance of “getting the language right,” the way the Project was described to potential partners and stakeholders. A participant mentioned the importance of annual reports, letters from the Project Chair, and talking points: “it's really important the language that we used ... we really had to be thoughtful about how about the wording of all these things.” Another talked about the importance of finding common language to building trust, “For example, it took me time to trust you knew what you were doing. I didn't know you. There were times when we talked that it felt like you were speaking such a different language. ... I need to figure out how we come to some common language because we [need] to work together.”

Eight participants noted the importance of managing communication or what Vangen and Huxham (2003) called ‘nurturing relationships by managing



communication.’ When asked about how collaboration was enabled, a participant said, “There have been challenges along the way. We have gotten together at least a couple times a year to talk about how it's going and things that we can each do better. Communication has been an important part of it.”

**Time spent.** “Time spent” was a frequent theme in the interviews as an important contributor to the success of the collaboration both in terms of the time collaborators spent with each other and also attention paid to the Project. It was typically mentioned as a resource that helped facilitate communication and thus categorized with the information systems component. One participant named time and attention as a most important resource of the project. Ten interviewees made comments about the importance of CSP collaborators spending time and attention with each other and stakeholders, including outside of formal meetings, to the success of the Project including building trust. One talked about the work of key participants, “really taking the time. I think we really did build good, good trust.” An observer talked about how the quality of communication increased with time spent, “The level of discourse went up over time. ... I think that the conversations became more rich, probably a little more deep because we weren't doing the polite dance around each other by now, you know, after a couple of years of this, the vocabularies pretty well shared, the concepts are pretty well understood.”

A participant describing the work in the first year of the Project talked about the importance of explaining it and spreading awareness about it, “A lot of what we did ... sometimes we would just take a walk to get coffee and we would talk to five people on the street and tell them what we're doing.”

**Meetings and events.** To advance the agenda of the Project, the collaborators used a variety of formal, regular, and frequent meetings (both in-person and virtual) to coordinate amongst themselves. Eight interviewees mentioned meetings and events in general or specific ones in the context of their interviews as being pivotal to the Project. Though the core collaborators lived in four states across the U.S., there were regular in-person meetings. For example, one participant drew a direct line between in-person team meetings and trust, describing an early meeting as “our big trust fall.” Despite the frequency of the meetings, participants commented about the Project suffering from not enough communication. One said, “there may have been some times where we let a little too much time lapse between meetings and getting together.” In addition, there were numerous events, including social events and celebrations, funder briefings, and public announcements to promote the Project with stakeholders.

**Social engagement.** Four of nine participants talked about the importance of more social interactions to the strength of the relationships built between collaborators and with stakeholders. Social engagement differs from time spent and meetings and events in that it referred to ‘non-working’ kinds of events. Describing how the collaboration worked, one participant said, “I became much more of a believer through this process of taking the time to do dinner and just hanging out.” Another explained,

Facetime is really important, being together, having meals. Serious days followed up by not so serious evenings. ... if you have a really important meeting and you don't schedule breaks, shame on you, because during the breaks, all the real conversations will happen. ... But we really needed to have [time to] reflect a little bit.

Talking about building trust with stakeholders, a participant said, “In Louisville, we had grand receptions at [a private home]. It is a very special honor to be invited there. ... We

showed a lot of gratitude. Gratitude is something that, you know, really helped us create these solid relationships and have people feel heard.”

### **Negotiated Order**

In Ainsworth and Feyerherm’s (2016) diagnostic model, negotiated order is both a design component and an intermediate output. Negotiated order exists when organizations have settled how they will interact with one another going forward. A negotiated order is fluid, highly susceptible to changes as new events occur or new individuals or organizations become involved (Nathan & Mitroff, 1991). CSP participants described different processes for collaboration and decision-making for different portions and at different moments in the process. They also directly linked aspects of the collaborative processes to trust.

Several trust-sustaining behaviors contributed to both Constituency and Negotiated Order, including ‘nurturing relationships by managing joint ownership’ and ‘nurturing relationships by managing varying levels of commitment.’ With respect to managing joint ownership, a participant described,

I attribute so much of the success of the Compassionate Schools Project’s ... to the visionary leadership of every person on the team. One reason this project has been so successful, everyone stepped outside of their own comfort zones. No one ever cared or appeared to care who gets credit for anything. Everybody was committed to the seven full years of implementation, and no one ever considered not seeing it, seven years, through, no matter what happened. Some roles and responsibilities have changed and evolved and some have even changed employment, but that has not changed the cohesiveness of the vision and of this dream.

Another participant said the following about the Project Chair, “He had a request rather than just making a demand ... he made it a discussion and brought everyone along. I think that’s the way we did a lot of things. There was a slow rollout that helps people understand, feel like they’re participating, and help bring them along.”

The Principal Investigator explained the importance of the core team members sharing ownership of decisions,

Nobody gets final say just because they get it. ... Although I sort of did, ... that was my role ...but on the other hand, I did not have final say because it wasn't functional for the organization for me to insist on that ... [because] you all would have quit or you would have started doing stuff underground, or you would have started to not tell me things that you should tell me, and vice versa.

Another participant said about the Principal Investigator, “[He] never wanted to do anything until he was confident that everybody that was going to be involved, engaged or implementing, or held accountable, was ready to go.”

In terms of managing levels of commitment, four of nine participants identified challenges or concerns with the commitment of JCPS, especially related to leadership transition, which serves as a great example of this trust-sustaining behavior. When asked about the times trust was tested, participants mentioned not only the change of superintendent but also other JCPS staff turnover in roles that were key to the Project and whether they would “stay on or be reassigned” as a moment that trust “could have frayed.” An interviewee said the following about how decisions were made,

I would argue by committee often and the key is that committee was the trusted team. And because it was a trusted team, the nuanced way in which the conversations could occur was at play. With trust, you have the ability to have a greater degree of nuance. And with and then the greater degree of nuance. I think that gets still more a greater degree of trust. And that’s where the flexibility starts to really express itself. So that what once seemed more rigid like someone saying it's got to be just this way, eventually the same person talking about the same thing could be more flexible. That was only made possible through the trust and the trust was constantly being nurtured. I don't think it would have worked otherwise, it would have broken. The Project at any given moment could break.

An interviewee commented that the team “collaborated with a very particular kind of style and approach. And it was both soft and precise at the same time.”

The quotations speak to a whole host of trust-initiating and trust-sustaining behaviors, and it is hard to see a negotiated order forming without these behaviors. Five of nine participants talked about ‘exploring willingness and ability to enact the agenda’ and seven of nine participants addressed ‘assessing sources of power and influence’ and ‘nurturing relationships by managing power imbalances’ (Vangen & Huxham, 2003).

The importance of partners’ willingness and ability to enable the collaboration was clear. A participant addressed JCPS leadership’s (former and current) willingness to make the collaboration possible,

...[the former superintendent’s] commitment, her sticking with us and her being willing to make statements ... we asked her, “can you say this is one of your top three priorities?” And, she did repeatedly. ... And, then [the current superintendent] to stick with it. And [another key JCPS staff member] for all the kind of fence-mending and opening of doors and keeping faith.

In the context of explaining how the Project was enabled, a participant stressed the importance of the [Chair’s] willingness “to put his time and energy and his family and his money on the table. And to say, we’re going to make this happen.” That participant also emphasized the importance of collaborators at UVA to the fundraising and “to persuade people to keep an eye on the goal.”

In terms of addressing power in the Project, the Principal Investigator told the story of an early meeting with the former Superintendent and other JCPS leaders: “There was [a willingness], kind of this yes to whatever we wanted. [The Project Chair] arranged the meeting. ... There was [the former Superintendent] and she was enthusiastic from the beginning. That was an entree that I had not seen before.”

Interviewees mentioned the importance of the Mayor of Louisville to the Project. The Chair and other interviewees explained that the Chair’s connection to the

Mayor and interest in supporting the Mayor's compassion platform contributed to the Chair making the connection between UVA and JCPS that enabled the Project. A participant shared that there is "some political influence involved in [CSP]. We have a mayor of the city who dedicates most of everything he does around this tenant of compassion. And so he is very much supportive." Another interviewee commented on the role of the Mayor to the Project, "When you're looking at a community-wide project, something is going to require a community to rally around, if its public leader isn't behind it, I think you can forget it. [The Mayor's] buy-in to [CSP] was completely consistent with where he was taking this city."

### **Summary**

This chapter outlined the results of the research interviews, presented a network map, and summarized key themes. Chapter 5 will conclude this study by discussing the research findings, considering if the research findings refute or support the content covered in the literature review, summarize implications for practice, discuss limitations, and recommend areas for future research.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The purpose of this research was to understand the factors that led to a successful transorganizational collaboration and in particular to understand the role that trust played in such collaborations using the CSP as a case study. Analysis of interview data attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the ingredients of successful transorganizational collaboration?
2. What role does trust play in the success of a transorganizational collaboration?

This chapter summarizes the research findings, draws conclusions about how the data inform the two research questions, discusses how the findings relate to the literature reviewed, highlights limitations of this study, provides recommendations to participants in transorganizational system (TS) collaborations, and explores options for future research. While the findings of the study do not provide definitive answers, they did illustrate theories presented in the literature.

### **Findings**

The data presented in Chapter 4 emphasized how trust, far from being a unique and separate design component and intermediate output, was integrated with many aspects of the collaboration, including 1) Opportunity, 2) Mission, Vision, and Goals, 3) Constituency, 4) Information Systems, and 5) Negotiated Order. Trust-initiating and trust-sustaining behaviors were present throughout the coding process, and trust appeared to enable success in many of the mapped the design components. In addition, the analysis suggests that the themes and behaviors were highly interrelated.

## **Conclusions**

The findings from this research study affirmed much of the existing research about collaboration, transorganizational systems, and trust. This research added to the conversation by examining CSP as a case study using Ainsworth and Feyerherm's (2016) diagnostic model for TS and Vangen and Huxham's (2003) model for comprehensive trust management. It verified aspects of both of these models and nuances within their components.

When evaluating the CSP based on the interview data, this research found that most but not all of the design components described by Ainsworth and Feyerherm (2016) contributed to the success of the Project. Like organizations, trans-organizational systems are multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. While one design component might contribute more to effectiveness at any particular point in time, in looking at the collaboration as a whole, all of the dimensions in the model were important for success over time. The components were so interrelated, particularly with trust, that it may be worth revising the model to see trust as an enabler or even an intermediate input. One impression from the data is that the distinctions between components, for example trust and negotiated order, may be so slight as to call for considering them together.

## **Role of Trust in Successful Collaboration**

The analysis found that most but not all of the trust-initiating and trust-sustaining behaviors detailed in Vangen and Huxham's (2003) model for comprehensive trust management supported the design components. This section provides a summary of conclusions related to trust followed by conclusions about other contributors to successful collaboration.



Trust was a clear contributor to the success of the Project. As an observer said about the Project, “I don't think that could have been done without the trust between those three organizations.” Trust came up frequently in the interviews, often before being introduced by me. Interviewees talked about the importance of being able to trust others to have integrity, to do what they say they will do, and that others have the expertise and capacity to execute their part of the project. This is directly in line with the two dimensions of trust (goodwill trust and competence trust) identified by Das and Teng (2001).

At times, interviewees introduced the topic of trust directly and, at other times, described work that enabled the collaboration and in doing so described behaviors that initiated or sustained trust. In this way, there are four distinct phenomena. First, trust is important across the aspects and design components of the collaboration, interrelated to the other components, and is hard to separate from the various components. This finding is in line with Vangen and Huxham's (2003) explanation that trust cannot be built in isolation of any other key variable. Second, trust was consistently initiated or sustained and was in service of the overall success of the project rather than a specific activity that participants attempted to build explicitly. In other words, behaviors that were initiated to enable the success of the collaboration were often the same behaviors that built or sustained trust. Third, trust was being generated (and tested) at the individual, organizational, and transorganizational level. For example, interpersonal trust reinforced trust between organizations, and sometimes trust was developed and reinforced among all of the organizations at once. This finding correlates to Tsasis's (2009) conclusion that interorganizational relationships were stabilized by interpersonal relationships; social

interactions between individuals enabled successful collaboration between organizations. This speaks to cross-level effects and how the microfoundations of trust at the individual level can have powerful effects beyond the interpersonal relationship. Finally, trust was built through trusted others. Interviewees described how they came to or observed others come to trust individuals and organizations through trusted others with one participant describing this phenomenon explicitly. Transorganizational systems are networks of people, groups, and organizations and trust can be a property of that network which facilitates operations.

These trust phenomena are well illustrated by the role of the Project Chair. The Chair was central in the network, as seen on the Network Map, and interviewees spoke to their perceptions of their importance to the Project. They made the initial connection between Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) and University of Virginia (UVA), serving as a catalyst to initiate trust, and they also continued to play an active role in enabling the Project, nurturing trust. They effectively transferred the goodwill they held with UVA and JCPS to be mutually held between those two organizations.

As apparent on the network map and reinforced by interviewee comments, the connections between the UVA and the Office of the Project Chair (Chair's Office) occurred more frequently than either organization with JCPS. Participants also reinforced the view that the relationship between UVA and the Chair's Office was different than either of those two organizations had with JCPS. Considering Himmelman's (1996) continuum of complexity and commitment (collaboration, co-operation, co-ordination, and networking), UVA and the Chair's Office had a more committed, and possibly also complex, relationship than either did with JCPS. The data

also suggest that these relationships are further complicated by the influence of the mayor of Louisville and their interest in the Project. Due to the evolution and needs of the project, as well as the degree to which organizational mission is aligned with TS mission, some interorganizational relationships are more central and stronger than others.

### **Additional Contributions to Successful Collaboration**

Based on this case study, there are a number of commonalities between factors that enabled successful collaboration in the Project and the literature.

**Opportunity.** The basic input into a TS is a wicked mess or opportunity that requires more than one organization to address (Trist, 1983). It was apparent that the Project sought to address a wicked mess - improving child health and wellness education with aims to improve academic performance, physical education, character development, and child health policies. The analysis identified powerful alignment of personal and organizational motivation with the mission and goals of the Project; this alignment created an important enabling opportunity. Circa 2012, UVA was interested in embarking on an effort to create and evaluate a curriculum similar to the one that the Project eventually centered around. At the same time, the Project Chair, an engaged alumnus of UVA, was partnering with the mayor of Louisville to explore opportunities to enact the compassion agenda in Louisville. In this way, the larger-sense nationwide TS looking to improve child health and wellness education was underorganized and the Chair's connection of UVA to Louisville/JCPS served as an organizing function that enabled action. In this case, the alignment of individuals and organizations with an overall Mission, Vision, and Goals created an opportunity, a fortuitous alignment. The power of this alignment will be discussed further in the next section.

The possibility and ultimately the ability to secure funding around that mission and scope was another key opportunity that drove the success of the Project. This opportunity involved both an alignment of possibility as well the willingness and capacity of the Chair's Office and UVA to partner on the fundraising effort. The Project Chair played a significant role in securing the seed funding, a philanthropic gift made to UVA, which was likely only possible because the Project would occur in Louisville. Then, for the next five years the Chair's Office and UVA would directly collaborate to secure the needed funded.

**Alignment of mission, vision and goals with constituency.** The Ainsworth and Feyerherm (2016) TS diagnostic model identifies Mission, Vision, and Goals and Constituency as two of the Design Components. These also served as two of the most often discussed themes throughout the interviews. Participants described how aspects of CSP's vision evolved as partners were identified and confirmed, and also how the existing mission and vision was critical to identify and secure partners. In this way, Mission, Vision, and Goals and Constituency worked together in an interdependent and reinforcing way. Cummings' (1984) proposed four stages, including identification, convention, organization, and evaluation in transorganizational development. In this model, partner identification (similar to Ainsworth and Feyerherm's (2016) Constituency) comes first, followed by convention and organization in which the precise vision and goals of the TS are established. In the case of CSP, these two phases, or components, were interdependent and built upon each other in a circular, rather than linear way. These aspects of the collaboration relied upon trust being built and sustained to form part of the overall complexity of the TS.

**Negotiated order.** Participants described different processes for collaboration and decision-making for different portions of the Project and at different times. Each organizational member of the TS retained its autonomy despite its participation. For example, the design of the research program worked in a more hierarchical way, whereas the fundraising activities relied much more on influence without authority and who was willing to do what. Participants also directly linked aspects of the collaborative processes to trust. The Project was made up of a number of interdependent but separate sub-functions, such as curriculum development, implementation/research, and fundraising, with a different mix of participants involved in each sub-function. In this way, the TS was “underorganized” or relatively loose in how the organizations interacted with each other. It was certainly underorganized to begin with as the different organizations had similar interests but lacked coordination. Even as the TS became more formal, this looseness enabled the Project by allowing groups to work in a way that was aligned with their capacity and motivations. The looseness may have also hindered the Project’s success by creating confusion regarding due to different ways of working across parts of the Project.

**Information systems.** Interviewees described the importance of both the quantity, frequency, and quality of time and attention spent to enable the collaboration. These took the shape of various meetings and events, both formal and “business-like” as well as more informal and social. Both kinds of interactions were critical to the success of the Project. Dedicated time, attention, and care created trust and proved participants to be trustworthy. This aligns with Vangen and Huxham’s (2003) argument that trust building requires investment of time as well as careful management of

other key issues including purpose, power imbalances, credit sharing, and the need for leadership without allowing anyone to take over.

### **Recommendations for Practice**

The findings from this study of the CSP could be expanded to other transorganization collaborations. It is always difficult, and sometimes dangerous, to generalize from a single case study to a larger phenomenon. However, recommendations here are based on data gathered in this research and the literature review while also recognizing that I had intimate knowledge of CSP. The following recommendations will be discussed here:

- Be open to emergence and seek opportunities
- Importance of interpersonal interaction to trust
- Dedicate human resources to collaboration

These recommendations continue with the theme of trust being integrated across the aspects of a collaboration.

**Be open to emergence and seek opportunities.** In the case of the CSP, the alignment of interests of UVA, the Project Chair, and the mayor of Louisville/JCPS created a rich intersection to address a ‘wicked mess.’ These eventual partners, along with other stakeholders, also were open regarding the exact methods and microgoals and continued to adapt aspects of the Project to maintain participation and accommodate the interests, needs, and restraints of various partners to ultimately enable the collaboration. In this way, the ‘quantity’ or level of trust needed was lowered when situations were mutually beneficial, and trust was built when organizations were accommodating of each other in small ways but still serving the overall

goal. Practitioners should look for ‘win-win’ situations and recognize the importance of compromise in collaboration.

**Importance of interpersonal interaction.** Interpersonal interactions were critical to the success of the Project. These include one on one conversations as well as structured meetings and more social events. In this way, strong interpersonal relationships were important within organizations and also stabilized interorganizational relationships. Practitioners can strengthen relationships by dedicating not only a quantity of time but recognizing the quality of that interaction matters. A variety of kinds of interactions maximizes the possibility of strengthening relationships. As an interviewee said, “if you have a really important meeting and you don't schedule breaks, shame on you, because during the breaks, all the real conversations will happen.”

**Dedicate human resources to collaboration.** True collaboration comes with a high level of complexity and significant commitment; it takes more time and effort to truly collaborate. In the case of the Project, the analysis found that trust was both initiated and nurtured in an effort to enable the success of the Project. Practitioners can explicitly dedicate human resources to fostering collaboration with attention to both trust initiating and nurturing behaviors. This may look like someone or some organization conducting the business of the TS. That said, it is important to realize that building and nurturing the collaboration including trust required is a ‘cost of doing business’ in a TS. Being explicit and intentional about the true costs in terms of human effort and strength of relationships among collaborators may strengthen the TS.

## **Limitations**

I was a key contributor to the CSP, was employed by UVA from the inception of the Project until November 2019, and was the lead professional fundraiser for the Project. At the time interviews were conducted, I was no longer employed by UVA. However, the interviewees were known to me. The existing relationships as well as my specific role in the Project could have impacted the nature of the interviews. For example, my role leading the fundraising effort for the Project may have led interviewees to talk more about aspects of the project that were related to fundraising.

In addition, my knowledge of the Project and the interviewees could have impacted the data analysis. An outside coder could have looked at the data to verify its reliability but deadlines for graduation encroached. In response to this, I tried to be very specific in the description of how the analysis occurred so that other researchers could replicate the process.

Another limitation was the number and organizational representation of interviewees. The original intent was to include more participants from JCPS and additional observers but due to a combination of responsiveness and scheduling challenges, including the emergence and impact of the global coronavirus pandemic, this was not possible.

The interview questions were open-ended, and responses depended on what the interviewee deemed relevant or remembered. For example, multiple participants focused certain responses on events within a single organization as opposed to between organizations. In addition, there is the possibility that my role in the Project influenced what interviewees deemed relevant or remembered.



A final limitation of the research is the assumptions and boundaries that I set about the Project for the sake of the study. Based on my knowledge of the project, this study made an initial assumption that the CSP was successful. At the time the interviews were conducted, the Project was fully funded and it seemed inevitable that the curriculum would be implemented and data collected as designed. Implementation and data collection were disrupted due to JCPS schools closing in Spring 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic; plans are being made to complete data collection which will likely require an additional round of fundraising. In addition, I defined the core organizational partners as UVA, JCPS, and the Office of the Project Chair. These three organizations were seen as the primary collaborators but were not the only collaborating organizations. Additional organizations included city government, funders, and other community partners. A more inclusive boundary and the addition of other voices might have revealed different perspectives.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

These limitations and other factors allow for additional research opportunities. The data set could be expanded to include interviews with more participants and observers as well as additional data collection methods employed. In addition, the boundaries set by me for this study could be expanded to consider additional organizational partners, such as funders. Though nearing the end of its planned seven years at the time of this research, the CSP was still ongoing and follow-up activity beyond the original project design is underway and being considered. Additional research after more time has passed on this same Project could expand upon this

research. This study focused on a specific TS, which may be a limitation; other collaborations could be studied.

## **Summary**

The world's most complicated societal problems are not going to be adequately addressed by one organization working alone. Addressing challenges and taking advantage of opportunities to improve education, health, the environment, among others are going to require multiple organizations (e.g., nonprofits, government agencies, and private industry) to work together to innovate and implement. The CSP sought to have a major, nationwide impact on children's education in terms of academic performance, physical education, character development, and child health policies through the partnership of a major research university, a large public school district, and the office of a civic leader-philanthropist.

Between the time the participant interviews were conducted and the conclusions were outlined for this study, the world shifted dramatically due to the global coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic necessitated that public schools around the country, including in Jefferson County, shut down or shift to virtual education for the balance of the academic year. At the same time, the United States is facing tremendous economic instability and racial violence has fueled widespread protests, including in Louisville where Breonna Taylor was killed by police (Oppel & Taylor, 2020). The need for TS problem solving has never been greater as humanity faces increasingly large and complex problems. The impact that the CSP seeks to have through bolstering childhood physical and mental health while bolstering their social emotional skills speaks directly to the kind of action that needs to take place to address structural inequality. Understanding how

TS's work is as important as ever and yet the nature of school-based education is changing radically, at least for a time.

Through the literature review and interviews, it is clear that trust is critical to successful collaborations and that the components that make up these collaborations are interrelated and complex. Using the practices outlined, such as dedicating time and attention to interpersonal interactions, being open to alignment of aims, including willingness to shift micro-goals in order to create alignment and recognizing the costs of collaborations, can aid TSs seeking to innovate and implement positive change at large scale.

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## **Appendix A: Interview Request Email**

Dear (Name Here),

I'm conducting an evaluation of the collaboration that enabled the Compassionate Schools Project for my master's thesis in organization development at Pepperdine University. The purpose of my study is to better understand what is required to form and sustain a multi-organization, multi-stakeholder team seeking a social change solution. I'm writing today to ask if you would be willing to be interviewed for my project.

I am conducting individual interviews with key leaders and stakeholders of the Compassionate Schools Project as well as reviewing archival data. I expect the interviews to last 45 minutes to an hour. The interview will be audio-recorded. Would you please let me know if you are willing to participate in this study?

If you have any questions, please let me know. Thank you for your consideration.

Thank you,  
Erin

## **Appendix B: Informed Consent Waiver**



**PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY**

***Graziadio School of Business and Management***

**INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

***An evaluation of a transorganizational development process  
promoting positive social change***

You are invited to participate in a research study because you are a member of the leadership team or key stakeholder of the Compassionate Schools Project. This study is being conducted by Erin Hall, degree candidate for a Master of Sciences in Organization Development, under the supervision of her advisor, Professor Christopher Worley, Ph.D., at Pepperdine University. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate.

Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or only completing the items for which you feel comfortable.

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

There is a growing consensus that humanity's most complex problems are not going to be solved by a single organization but by collaborative, multi-stakeholder, multi-organization teams. Existing organization and systems theory do not necessarily support or motivate these teams to form and then function. This study seeks to explore the conditions that enable such collaborative teams to be formed and sustained and, in particular, what role trust plays.

**STUDY PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview with the researcher about your role and impressions of the collaboration that enabled the Compassionate Schools Project. This interview will be audio recorded and later transcribed.

The records collected for this study will be confidential as far as permitted by law. However, if required to do so by law, it may be necessary to disclose information collected about you. Pepperdine University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. All data will be encrypted and stored in a secure fashion. If any direct

quotes you provide are to be used, the researcher will verify the quote with you and request permission to include it in her report and, if needed, to request that the quote may be identified with you. Every attempt will be made to report the results of the study using generic identifiers, such as “a member of the leadership team.”

There are minimal risks associated with participation in this study but could include fatigue or boredom as well as concerns raised by the questions about the Compassionate Schools Project. On the other hand, benefits to participation include the opportunity for you to be reflective about your participation in and contributions to the Compassionate Schools Project and insights based on the research that could benefit the collaborative work. In addition, the researcher may, at the conclusion of the study, meet with participants to share the findings of the study. Benefits to society in general may include increased understanding of collaborations such as the one being studied.

### **SUSPECTED NEGLECT OR ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

Under California law, the researcher who may also be a mandated reporter will not maintain as confidential, information about known or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse or neglect of a child, dependent adult or elder, including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse or neglect. If any researcher has or is given such information, he or she is required to report this abuse to the proper authorities.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

You understand that the researcher is willing to answer any inquiries you may have concerning the research herein described. You understand that you may contact the following if you have any other questions or concerns about this research.

Erin Hall  
erin.f.hall@pepperdine.edu  
434-906-3525

Christopher Worley  
chris.worley@pepperdine.edu  
310-568-554

### **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University/ 6100 Center Drive/ Suite 500 /Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or gpsirb@pepperdine.edu.

## **Appendix C: Participant Interview Questions**

## Interview Questions

Thank you for taking time to meet with me. The purpose of this interview is for me to better understand your role and your perceptions of the efficacy of the collaboration we call the Compassionate Schools Project. For the sake of this conversation, we're defining the scope of the collaboration as the development of the curriculum and its implementation and study in Louisville. In addition, we're defining the term "project leadership" as the collaboration between UVA, the Project Chair and his office, and JCPS.

1. Personal Background Info
  - a. When did you get involved in CSP?
  - b. How did you get involved?
  - c. Why did you get involved with the Compassionate Schools Project?
  - d. What's your role in CSP?
2. What 3-5 people do (did) you interact with the most? What do you talk about? What frequency?
3. What resources were needed to make this possible? Who contributed and how did they work together to acquire those resources?
4. How did the network collaborate to develop the curriculum?
  - a. Who was involved?
  - b. Who made decisions?
  - c. What was the decision-making process?
5. How did the network collaborate to implement and study the curriculum?
  - a. Who was involved?
  - b. Is the decision maker clear?
  - c. What was the decision-making process?
6. Challenges
  - a. What were the top 3 challenges you faced in this project? How were they addressed?
7. Trust
  - a. How would you characterize the level of trust among project leadership (as defined earlier)?
  - b. Has that level of trust increased or decreased over time?
  - c. How was trust built? How/when was it tested?
8. Ending Questions
  - a. Is there anything else that we should have talked about that we haven't?

## **Appendix D: Observer Interview Questions**

## Interview Questions // Observer

Thank you for taking time to talk with me. The purpose of this interview is for me to better understand your perceptions of the efficacy of the collaboration we call the Compassionate Schools Project and specifically the role trust played in that collaboration. For the sake of this conversation, we're defining the scope of the collaboration as the original project, the development of the curriculum and its implementation and study in Louisville. In addition, we're defining the term "project leadership" as the collaboration between UVA, the Project Chair and his office, and JCPS.

1. Personal Background Info
  - a. What is your affiliation with the Compassionate Schools Project?
  - b. How/why did you get involved?
2. Trust
  - a. From your perspective and knowledge of the project, would you say that the levels of trust among project leadership - today - are high, medium, or low?
  - b. Has that level of trust changed over time?
  - c. If yes, can you tell me about how it has varied during the project's duration and why it changed?
3. Is there anything else you would like for me to know?